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Public Participation Issues in Preservation Planning: Practices of Chinese Historic District

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Public Participation Issues in Preservation Planning: Practices of Chinese Historic District

Abstract

Many issues are awaiting to be solved during Chinese urban redevelopment planning process. Among those issues, the lack of participation of stakeholders in urban redevelopment projects in historic district, other than all levels of government, real estate developers, and planning professionals, is one of the main issues that need special attention to be paid and will be addressed in this thesis.

Via introducing the preservation planning and the concept of historic district, this article will first summarize five different urban redevelopment approaches in order to represent an overall picture of urban redevelopment projects in the last thirty years. Then, the problem of public participation will be introduced based on five approaches. Before the issue of public participation in Chinese urban redevelopment planning practice is carefully examined, the American experience of public participation in urban planning will be introduced, especially in preservation planning field, in order to clarify the importance of the public participation and the successful stories and lessons in the past.

After that, based on the western theoretical base, the article will review five different approaches via analyzing the relationships of the stakeholders in five typical cases, thereby uncovering the reasons behind the lack of the participations in urban redevelopment projects in China and leading to the discussions of examining six opportunities and three threats of applying American public participation experience in Chinese context.

Last but not least, a list of suggestions on how to improve public participation in Chinese urban redevelopment projects will be provided. They can be categorized as the policies, the strategies, and the tools, with an emphasis on the appliance of digital media.

Keywords

historic district, urban redevelopment, public participation, digital media, ngos

Disciplines

Historic Preservation and Conservation

Comments

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**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION ISSUES IN PRESERVATION PLANNING: PRACTICES
OF CHINESE HISTORIC DISTRICT**

LI YI

A THESIS

in

Historic Preservation

Presented to Faculties of the University of Pennsylvania in Partial
Fulfillment of the Requirements of the Degree of

MASTER OF SCIENCE IN HISTORIC PRESERVATION

2012

Advisor

Randall F. Mason

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Dedication

I dedicate this thesis to a country with such a remarkable history that I care so much, to people who helped, supported, and encouraged me to pursue my childhood dreams - preserve the old houses in my hometown from demolition, and, last but not least, to those people who I love deeply in my life. Thank you.

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Chapter 1. Issues of Urban Redevelopment Projects in China

In December 1978, right after the death of Mao Zedong, the Communist Party of China (CPC) initiated economic reform on its crumbling economy, which was severely impaired by ten year's Cultural Revolution riots.¹ Now, thirty-four years have passed and the reform was widely regarded as a decision that has a deep impact on modern China. Within these thirty-four years, China has gradually developed from a poor and insulated country to one of the largest economy in the world. The High Economic growth not only resulted in a large scale of urbanization and evidently improved living conditions of urban residents, but also became a catalyst for the transition of the Chinese Society. The Chinese people, especially the rapid growing middle classes in the city, start to pursue the democratic rights in participating in the daily administration of a country.

However, the obsolete political system of this Communist Country from 1950s is playing a negative role in achieving the social justice and democracy during the economic development. During the last three decades, to fulfill the planned indexes of macro-economic indicators, such as growth of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) data, the numbers of positions that are created, the annual amount of the foreign investments that area attracted, etc., become the core elements of government's long-term plan. Meanwhile, the increasingly severe conflicts that resulted from the economic-growth priority policy, between the rich and poor, the people and the government, the etc., were intentionally neglected or suppressed.

In terms of the urban planning field. On one hand, the normal citizens are pursuing the basic rights to participate in the urban design of their own cities; on the other hand, the beneficiary groups from the economic reform is trying to block the situation from happening, worrying of

¹ The Leader of Chinese Communist Party and the First President of China from 1949 to 1978.

which will lead to another revolution that can deprive the wealth that they have been accumulated during last thirty years. The government is playing a role as both rule maker and game participator and the common goal of pursuing economic benefits leads it to establish a solid alliance with other powerful groups, such as real estate developers.² Therefore, the State is not incapable of addressing the social conflicts by enacting policies and regulations that are neutral or in favor of the weaker groups, neither can it monitor the urban planning practices, which is a role that the State usually will play in western planning projects. Even more, sometimes, the government/developer alliance will cooperate to obstruct other groups from pursuing their rights, such as the depression of nationwide appeals from local residents to stop mass scales of demolition in 1990s.³ The historic buildings, streets, districts, and cities in China cannot escape the trend. The forced demolition of historic buildings, the unjust compensation for displacement, etc. were also happening during urban redevelopment projects with the last three decades.

1.1 The Stories of Urban Redevelopment Project between 1978 and 2012

The preservation of historic buildings, streets, and districts did not draw much attention between 1949 and 1978 during Mao's rule. The Communist Party of China, influenced by the planning practice of Soviet Union, regarded the historic buildings and districts as the surviving feudalism and capitalism impacts and planned to replace them with modern buildings in order to construct a socialist city. The demolitions did happen; however, thanks to the low economic growth and the consistent political movement, it was rarely happened in district or city level. Meanwhile, during this period, the government was in favor of pro-birth policies in order to full

² Campanella, T. (2000). *The Concrete Dragon: China's Urban Revolution and What It Means for the World*. New York: Princeton Architectural Press.

³ Campanella, T. (2000).

in the huge population loss during the Sino-Japanese War between 1931 and 1945 and the Chinese Civil War from 1945 to 1949. The sudden growth leads to sharp shortages of residential units in major cities; as a result, multi-families gradually shared the houses that used to reside a single family. The limited individual living space, the lack of public facilities, and the deterioration of infrastructures composited a low living conditions for the residents over there.

Starting from 1978, the economic reform policy by CPC triggered the largest scale of urbanization process in human history.⁴ Under such circumstance, the historic areas that were located in the downtown of cities became the targets for redevelopment projects, owing to the low urban living conditions mentioned above and decades of lack of maintenance. The historic buildings, districts, and cities were considered as obstacles of urban economic development and modernization process.⁵ Numerous historic buildings were razed to supply lands for modern high-rises and more were scheduled to demolish in next decade. A few pro-preservation architects and planners, as well as scholars, spoke out during such critical situation and advocated for the legislation of historic and cultural resources. In 1982, after yearlong appeals to the central government by several national-renown architects and planners, the country enacted its first national preservation law, the “Law of People’s Republic of China on Protection of Cultural Relics”, to preserve historic buildings.⁶

The law had a deep impact on preservation practice of historic buildings in national, provincial, municipal, and district level. However, since the act focused solely on isolated historic buildings that were listed as cultural relics but not historic areas or intangible heritages, it does

⁴ Campanella, T. (2000).

⁵ David, D. (1994). Urban Residential Redevelopment in the People's Republic of China. *Urban Study*, 31(9), 1497-1516.

⁶ Wang, J. (1998). The Preservation for the Historic District: Concept and the Method (in Chinese). *City Planning Review (城市规划评论)*, 3(6): 34-36. The Article was translated into English by author.

not protect the historic district or cities by law. Several regulations in provincial or municipal levels were enacted during 1990s, including The Preservation Planning of Historic and Cultural Preservation District in Old City of Beijing in 1994 and Shanghai Historic Fabric and Landscape Preservation Plan (Historic Building and District) in 1999.⁷

However, the implementation of these regulations was difficult due to negative recognitions of different stakeholders for various reasons during 1990s. Firstly, the real estate developers, who regarded the historic buildings with low economic values, were allowed to participate in the redevelopment projects.⁸ The main objective of developers was to pursue economic profits during redevelopment projects, which determined that the preservation historic buildings and areas would not be marked as priority or not be considered. Secondly, the willingness of the government to implement the regulations and plans was weak; most of the government officers did not recognize either historic or economic values of historic districts within Chinese cities.⁹ Preservation efforts of historic areas were frequently given way to mass scale urban redevelopments, an increasing number of historic buildings in historic districts were partly or fully demolished to develop shopping centers, high-rise apartments. Lastly, the local residents were expecting to move out of the historic areas. During urban redevelopment projects, a large amount of local inhabitants chose to relocate to newly developed areas of the city due to the

⁷ Ruan, Y. & Gu, X. (2004). An Analysis about the Practical Patterns to Conserve the Historic Districts in China (in Chinese). *Tongji University Journal Social Science Section (同济学报社会科学版)*, 15(5): 1-6.

⁸ Ministry of Land and Resources of People's Republic of China. (1990). *The Temporary Regulation of Leasing and Transferring State-owned Land Use Rights of People's Republic China (in Chinese)*. Beijing: State Council of China.

⁹ Wang, J. (10 Jan 2005).

inferior living conditions resulted from obsolete infrastructures and temptation of relocation subsidy policies that were offered by the government.¹⁰

The first ten years of 21st century witnessed the raising awareness of historic preservation in China, when rapid economic development evidently raised the living standard of the Chinese people. For many urban residents, the fulfillment of basic living needs was no longer the top priority; instead, they began to pursue the satisfactions of spiritual lives. For a long time, the ideal urban life means modern infrastructures, high-rises, City Parks, etc. and tradition means the backward traditional style in old buildings. However, when people suddenly realized that all cityscapes became very similar, nostalgic feelings of the city's past were emerging. Under such circumstance, the historic architecture, sites, districts, the place and space, which carry rich historic information, enable people to trace back to their origins and traditions, and record unique personal memories, become the places that people started to cherish. However, the demolished buildings can never be reversed. A large amount of Historic buildings and districts have disappeared in many cities. For example, in Beijing, the amount of Hutong (a unique name of small streets in Beijing) has been decreased from approximately 3,600 in 1949 to around 500 in 2012.¹¹ Ironically, several national listed historic cities by "The First List of National Historic and Cultural Cities" that was established by the State Council and the Ministry of Construction in 1982, even did not have any historic districts left, such as Ji'nan City, the capital of Shandong Province and Changsha City, the capital of Hunan Province.¹²

¹⁰ Campanella, T. (2010). *The Concrete Dragon: China's Urban Revolution and What It Means for the World*. New York, United States: Princeton Architectural Press.

¹¹ Ruan, Y., & Gu, X. (2004).

¹² Ruan, Y., & Sun, M. (2001). The Study On Some Issues Related To The Conservation And Planning For The Historic Streets And Areas In China (in Chinese). *City Planning Review (城市规划评论)*, 25(10), 25-32.

In the urban planning field, preservation planning was advocated by architects and planners from research institutes or universities as essential elements of redevelopment practices in China. Additionally, after the enactment of “The National Preservation Act of Historic City, Town, and Villages” in 1998, the preservation planning section became a required section of the city master plans, regarding the preservation of historic buildings and districts as an critical part to sustain city’s past.¹³ Different stakeholders recognized the value of historic buildings and districts, as a recorder for historic events of city, as a carrier of cities’ memories, as a container of cities’ unique character and culture.¹⁴ However, to reveal an optimistic attitude of preservation practice in China is still too early since planning efforts and results are still far from perfect.

1.2 Public Participation in Chinese Urban Redevelopment Project

There are still issues that are waiting to be solved and more are emerging. Among those issues, the lack of participation of stakeholders in urban redevelopment projects in historic district, other than all levels of government, real estate developers, and planning professionals, is one of the main issues that need special attention to be paid and will be addressed in this thesis.

The Chapter 2 will introduce the preservation planning system and the concept of historic district first. Then, five different urban redevelopment approaches will be summarized in order to represent an overall picture of urban redevelopment projects in the last thirty years. At last, the problem of public participation will be introduced based on five approaches.

¹³ Ruan. Y. & Sun, M., (2001).

¹⁴ Ruan. Y. & Sun, M., (2001).

Before the issue of public participation in Chinese urban redevelopment planning practice is carefully examined, the Chapter 3 will first summarize the western experience of public participation in urban planning, especially in preservation planning field, in order to clarify the importance of the public participation and the successful stories and lessons in the past.

After that, based on the theoretical base in Chapter 3, the Chapter 4 will review five different approaches via analyzing the relationships of the stakeholders in five typical cases, thereby uncovering the reasons behind the lack of the participations in urban redevelopment projects in China and leading to the discussions of opportunities and threats in Chapter 5.

Then, the Chapter 5 will examine the feasibility of applying western public participation experience in Chinese context via the discussions of six opportunities and three threats.

Last but not least, in Chapter 6, a list of suggestions on how to improve public participation in Chinese urban redevelopment projects will be provided. They can be categorized as the policies, the strategies, and the tools.

Chapter 2. Preservation Planning of Historic District in China

Before the participation issue in historic district planning is analysed, a general overview of Preservation Planning of Historic Districts should be discussed first to lay a solid background.

2.1 Preservation Planning System

In contemporary China, by administrative meaning, the historic preservation is conducted with the cooperation and coordination of “Ministry of Housing and Urban-Rural Development of the People’s Republic of China (MOHURD)” and “State Administration of Cultural Heritage (SACH)”, within which there are three levels, namely, historic structures preservation, historic district preservation, and cities with historically and culturally significance preservation.¹⁵ Usually, the planning bureau of municipal or city government is in charge of designing a plan and the government takes the responsibility to implement the plan, with a possible collaboration with real estate developers. The municipal or city People’s Congress has a role of monitoring the implementation.¹⁶ Additionally, scholars mainly hold roles as consultants; some of them may take positions in government-affiliated planning institute to participate in enacting master plans. The local communities, however, still have very low level of participation. The participation awareness is still lacking in both policy-makers and communities, plus no laws and regulations are enacted to ensure the participation process. Moreover, the extremely weak power of NGOs and willing ness of establishing NGOs makes the situation even worse.¹⁷

¹⁵ Wang, J. (1998). The Preservation for the Historic District: Concept and the Method (in Chinese). *City Planning Review (城市规划评论)*, 3(6): 34-36.

¹⁶ Wang, J. (1998).

¹⁷ Zhou, J. (2000). Public Participation: An Important Strategy to Implement the Democracy during City Planning Practice (in Chinese). *Planners (规划师)*, 16(4): 4-15.

2.2 Historic Districts

Within the 'Preservation Act of Cultural and Historic City', historic districts are defined as "a certain scale of urban area with relatively rich cultural heritage and historic architecture which is a relatively comprehensive reflection of traditional appearance, ethnic traditions or local characters."¹⁸ The general preservation approach advised in the act are, firstly, to preserve the appearance while the interior rebuilding is allowed; secondly, to ameliorate living conditions of inhabitants through perfecting urban infrastructure; thirdly, to renovate the historic district step by step.¹⁹ Three advices that mentioned above become the basis for various approaches that has been taken during the last thirty years.

2.3 Typical Planning Approaches

In Chinese preservation planning system, five typical planning approaches have been widely utilized in urban redevelopment projects during last thirty years.

The first approach solely preserves single historic buildings that are listed in national register with historic or cultural significance (similar concept with Preservation by National Park Service) and demolishes other buildings and streets within the historic fabric (similar concept with Reconstruction by NPS).²⁰ With a planning rationale to pursue maximal economic benefits, demolitions of historic districts are considering as a necessary sacrifice to accommodate large-scale commercial development projects. A typically example was the demolition of 'Sanfangqixiang' (means three lanes and seven alleys in Chinese) Historic Districts in 1994. With the raising of the awareness and the improving of planning laws and regulations after 2000s,

¹⁸ Wang, J. (1998).

¹⁹ Wang. (1998)

²⁰ National Park Service. (1995). The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties. Washington D.C.: U.S. Department of Interior.

this approach is rarely adapted nowadays. However, it may become a case in several extreme undeveloped regions.²¹

The second approach is to preserve featured architectural appearance and renovate the interior environment (to restore the exterior and reconstruct the interior according to NPS Standards).²² In addition, the urban infrastructure is updated to meet the requirements of modern life. Projects that adopt this approach are mainly conducted through ‘Public-private Partnership’. As a result, the function of historic districts will change from residence to commerce, cultural activities, or entertainment use, etc. The historic appearance may be preserved well; however, the historic buildings are not authentic anymore and the urban fabric is completely changed, with the loss of scale of a traditional neighbourhood in Chinese city and the leave of local inhabitants.²³ A case in point is ‘Xintiandi’ Historic District in Shanghai in 1990, which achieved a huge business success at that time and made the approach once very popular across China due to the huge profits it can draw. During 1990s and 2000s, the “Xintiandi” type projects were developed all across China and the issue of authenticity was purposely neglected due to the large economic value it can generate for its surrounding real estate developments.²⁴ The similar projects were still undergoing after 2000s, even if the academia started a trend to review its negative impact on built heritage itself.

On-site upgrading is the third approach. The authority collects the regeneration funding through selling part of the plots in historic districts and the housing after regeneration to residents (a combination of rehabilitation and new construction).²⁵ At the same time, it

²¹ Ruan & Gu. (2004).

²² National Park Service. (1995).

²³ Ruan & Gu. (2004).

²⁴ Ruan & Gu. (2004).

²⁵ NPS. (1995).

encourages the inhabitants to conduct its own regeneration work in an individual household unit and requires the regeneration to process step by step. It preserves not only the urban fabric, but also the part of local communal network (only part of communities will choose to stay); however, the original historic buildings in the neighbourhood are heavily renovated with floors added to them. A perfect example here was the 'Ju'er Hutong' Historic District in Beijing in 1995. The project has more experimental meaning and it has never been repeated afterwards.²⁶

The fourth approach is to reuse old industrial buildings and residential houses to adapt them to different uses while enacting policies to attract the residents to stay (restore the exterior to the appearance on first half of 20th century and rehabilitate the interior for new uses).²⁷ This is a relatively new approach and has a great potential in the future. The typical example is 'Tianzifang' Historic District in Shanghai. A place, where used to have factories for industrial production, has been transferred into an area filled with artists and renovated art studios after urban redevelopment project. However, the approach faces challenges still, the gentrification of the neighbourhood seem to be unavoidable. The residents may not be forced to relocated anymore; however, a certain portions of local residents choose to leave when they take the offer from wealthy people who is in strong favor of the historic environment.²⁸

The holistic preservation approach of the old city is the last one that is utilized (Preserve the ancient city fabric such as city walls, streets structures, etc., restore the exterior historic buildings on main commercial street and reconstruct the interior, rehabilitate the historic residential courtyard for modern use, and reconstruct the tottering "safety houses" for safety

²⁶ Zhang, Y., & Fang, K. (2003). "Politics of housing redevelopment in China: The rise and fall of the Ju'er Hutong project in Inner-city Beijing." *Journal of Housing and Built Environment*, 18(1): 75-87.

²⁷ NPS. (1995).

²⁸ Ke, X., & Hui Yu, Dan Xiong. (2011). The Protection of Characteristic Streets in Modern City: A Case Study of Shanghai Tianzifang (in Chinese). *Huazhong Architecture (华中建筑)*, 46(9): 20-25.

concern).²⁹ Under such approach, the whole historic fabric was preserved in a superior condition than all other approaches and the new developments were all planned in new developed area of the city. Moreover, due to the stability of local communities, the local cultures and traditions were also saved. However, the conditions were very limited if the approach was going to be applied. The historic cities must be in a relatively undeveloped circumstance and the development plan has not been initiated or still under consideration. In addition, government regulations of preservation must be enacted earlier than later, especially before the developers were allowed to participate in. Usually, the approach is hard to apply nowadays since the urban development waves have swept all over China and it is not possible to isolate the old areas to achieve the holistic preservation. In the history, the approach was applied to Pingyao City in Shan'Xi Province and Lijiang Province in Yun'nan Province, both were small-scale (compared to Beijing and Shanghai) cities that located in relatively undeveloped regions in China.³⁰

2.4 Issue of Public Participation

Naturally, each of the planning approach above will lead to different results; however, there are one common issue in all of them – the lack of public participation, either in processes or results. As an essential element of planning process in western countries, the public, especially the local communities, usually play a significantly important role in involving in all stages of planning and monitoring its implementation. However, in China, the participation is still in a low level or even none basis, authority or the alliance of authority and real estate development usually dominates the preservation planning process, with low level of participation of scholars in academia field. Thus, no matter the historic district will be preserved or not, the local communities have no impact on the policy-making process and implementation. As users of

²⁹ NPS. (1995).

³⁰ Ruan & Guo. (2004).

historic district or public who recognize the needs of historic district to preserve city memory, their rights are really limited. Moreover, if the strong public organization was formed to negotiate the planning decisions with the authorities, then those demolished historic buildings may have already been saved.³¹

Therefore, in order to deeply explore the participation issues, the American theories and practices on public participation in urban planning field will be discussed in order to review the importance of the public participation and summarize the successful story and failure lessons for Chinese urban redevelopment projects.

³¹ Li, X. (2005). Public participation in urban regeneration (in Chinese). *Urban Problems (城市问题)*, 46(3): 46-50.

Chapter 3. Public Participation in Preservation Planning Practices of

United States

Public participation became a critical part of the Urban Planning in western society in mid 1960s and the catalyst for the development of urban planning subject afterwards.³² On one hand, the civil rights movement raise the public's awareness of pursuing rights to participate in city planning process; on the other hand, in response to the problems that have emerged from the professional-dominated planning and the affect by the pluralism philosophy, a large amount of city planner begin the reconsider the roles of communities and the public in planning projects.³³

During the development of theories and practices over time, the participation in the urban planning was gradually recognized as a basic right for citizens. A consensus has been reached by stating that the urban residents, especially those who were affected by the urban planning process, must be involved in the formulations and discussions of the future city plan.

Additionally, the planning department should listen to feedbacks from different stakeholders and then considering their opinions into the policy-making process of the plan.³⁴

3.1 Civil Society

The concept of Civil Society came from the City State in Ancient Greece and became an important concept in the western politics afterwards. Although there seems to have no clear definition of the civil society, usually, the division of State/Market/Civil Society that was

³² Sun, S. (2004). The Evolution of the Basic Theories of Public Participation in Urban Planning in Western Countries (in Chinese). *Foreign Urban Planning (外国城市规划)*, 19(4), 15-19.

³³ Sun, S. (2004).

³⁴ Sun, S. (2004).

proposed by Golden White seems to be most widely accepted.³⁵ The civil society is a type of organization that exists between the states the single household. The area was occupied by the organizations that are independent from the state and enjoy autonomy from its relationship of the state. The organizations are formalized according to the free wills of the citizens in order to collectively protect or enhance their common benefits and values.³⁶

The development of civil society is closely related to the perfection of the civil rights. The early civil democracy experiment did not award the participation rights to all the public.³⁷ Only upper class groups in civil society can enjoy the rights, the other groups, especially, women, the proletarians, and the ethnic minorities, were not awarded rights. The situation was gradually changing with the evolution of the society. After the weak groups were awarded the legal rights and political rights, they were also granted the social rights.³⁸ At last, they are able to enjoy the participation rights to be involved in decision-making process. Therefore, the degree and the participation groups of public participation was gradually enlarged and increased during the perfection of the civil rights.

Other than that, if all citizens want to enjoy freedom and a certain power of rights, then social equity among different strata of the civil society need to be achieved, which requires democracy thoughts with common basis to be cultivated. The right of citizenship was expressed as the citizen's desire in participation and self-determination.³⁹ That is to say, the perfection of the civil society and the effectiveness of the public participation rely much on the improvement of the ideological qualities. Only if the ideological qualities were improved, a civil culture can be

³⁵ White, G. (1994). Civil society, democratization and development (I): Clearing the analytical ground. *Democratization*, 1(2), 375-390.

³⁶ White, G. (1994).

³⁷ White, G. (1994).

³⁸ Wilson A.G. (1968). Models in Urban Planning: A Synoptic Review of Recent Literature. *Urban Studies*, 5(3): 249-276.

³⁹ Wilson A.G. (1968).

formed in the society and the citizenship can be created at an equal basis. These are the pre-conditions to achieve real democracy and autonomy in the society.⁴⁰

3.2 Government to Governance

Under traditional viewpoints, the government was regarded as a completely rational entity that represents the holistic benefits of the whole society. However, in fact, the rationale of the government could only be achieved in a certain extent. The government also had its benefit to pursue and the benefits of different departments within it.⁴¹ They were hard to or often impossible to fully represent the real public benefits. Therefore, it was very dangerous to put all hope in the only power center and the participative governance in a mature civil society should be valued, which emphasized on the supply of the public service and civil participation when solving public issues. To be more specifically, in civil society, the government was no longer the single power core to manage the society, but would share the rights with the NGOs, NPOs, Neighborhood Organizations, and Civil Organizations. These organizations would manage the public affairs together with private sector and the government to provide the responsibilities of the public service.⁴²

What was echoing with the discussion of the civil society was the discussion of the political structure reform in the western world after the World War II. Multi-political centers were advocated to establish in order to unite different political powers, which, based on the thought of pluralism, could involve more interest groups and enlarge the containment of the system.⁴³ Based on the quick emergence of civil society, the governance by multi-centers should replace

⁴⁰ Arnstein S.R. (1969). A Ladder of Citizen Participation. *Journal of the America Planning Association*, 35(4): 216-224.

⁴¹ Wilson A.G. (1968).

⁴² Friedmann, J. (1998). The New Political Economy of Planning: The Rise of Civil Society. In M. Douglass & J. Friedmann (Eds.), *Cities for Cities*. West Sussex: John Wiley & Sons.

⁴³ Friedmann, J. (1998).

the government by single-center to counter balance the abusive usage of the political power and to coordinate the movement of the civil society and the state.

3.3 Roles of the City Planner

The city planner cannot and should not regard themselves as a neutral individual or so-called expert to view and discuss the issues in planning; nonetheless, they should also treated themselves as groups which can be impacted by and have a impact on planning.⁴⁴ Urban planners are not only the group who is designing and managing the plan, but also the activists who should participate in the implementation of the plan.⁴⁵

3.4 Advocacy Planning

“A Choice Theory of Planning” that published by Davidoff and Reiner in 1962 was trying to construct the theory base of the public participation based on pluralism thoughts.⁴⁶ They stated that: “the whole process of planning is a matter of choices which are rooted in the judgment of core values. The planners’ own judgment of right or wrong, important or not important, can not represent the choices of the society. Since the decision-making is based on planner’s personal value system, not the public’s.”⁴⁷ Therefore, the ultimate goal of plan is to expand the choices and the opportunities to make choices, not vice versa. After the statement, Davidoff also stated his “Advocacy Planning” approach, a theory that expects urban planning practice to combine various needs, core value judgment, and aspiration of the whole society. The negotiation should

⁴⁴ Sun S. (2004).

⁴⁵ It was a very radical idea in 1960s in western countries; however, it has become a common recognition of nearly all western planners nowadays. Thus the public participation awareness in China will also become a common awareness in the future.

⁴⁶ Davidoff P. (1965). Advocacy and Pluralism in Planning. *Journal of the American Institute of Planners*, 31(4): 331-338.

⁴⁷ Davidoff P. (1965).

be conducted among various groups, in order to reach agreements on regulating their actions during plan implementation.⁴⁸

Moreover, the Advocacy Planning theory emphasized every stakeholder in the society to participate in the urban planning process. Therefore, the planning itself was a politicalized process, and the problem that emerged from the process also required the political solution.⁴⁹ Meanwhile, it was advocated that the public participation in urban planning should be involved in the policy-making process, thus, the planning is a political movement, which requires a stable, trustworthy, and effective political structures to guarantee the well-being of public participation. In order to achieve this goal, the civic society is an essential part.

3.5 Communicative Planning

In Sandercock's theory (1998), he emphasized that different stakeholders that were involved in decision-making, including the government sector, the community organizations, etc., should understand and communicate with each other and built a certain relationship when they are formalizing the final planning documents.⁵⁰ The planners should not play a role as the technical consultant or speakers for the government or the real estate developers; instead, they should regard themselves as facilitators, mediators, interpreters, and synthesizers. The development of urban planning into 1990s started to have more consultation and negotiation characters than before.⁵¹ Affected by the pluralism thoughts, what urban planning is seeking for

⁴⁸ Davidoff P. (1965).

⁴⁹ Sandercock L. (1998). *Toward cosmopolis: Planning for multicultural cities*. John Wiley: New York.

⁵⁰ Fainstein S. (2000). "New Directions in Planning Theory", *Urban Affairs Review*, Vol. 35, No. 4, pp. 451-478.

⁵¹ Sandercock L. (1998).

now is the communication among different stakeholders in order to explain unique core values, life styles, and cultural traditions to each other and design a collaborative plan via negotiation.⁵²

The core value of the communicative planning is to seek a multilateral cooperation among government, the public, the developers, and the planners. Within it the public refers to doctors, military officers, professors, scholars, retailers, small businessmen, etc., they can participate in the decision making process.⁵³ Therefore, the communicative planning is a political movement that has a wide democratic base. The listening and designing are two core activities that were very extreme important but have not been paid enough attention to. During the planning process, although the planner had a limited official powers, they could use multi tools to affect the policy-making process. These approaches included: to listen to the opinions of certain groups while neglecting others, to attract people's attention on certain issues while neglecting others, and to decide when to inform what information to which group to create expectation, hope, or fear.⁵⁴ In terms of the designing, all social activists (planners, customers, etc.,) should seek for common meaning of the creation, no matter it is a building, a part, a project, or a plan, which could gain acceptance by different stakeholders.⁵⁵

Therefore, planners would no longer plan the future development of the city based on a neutral viewpoint, in contrast, they will directly involve in the interactive process in the society. They were playing a role as mediators among different stakeholders; meanwhile, they would also participate in the negotiation process as a one of stakeholders.⁵⁶

⁵² Sandercock L. (1998).

⁵³ Fainstein S. (2000).

⁵⁴ Fainstein S. (2000).

⁵⁵ Fainstein S. (2000).

⁵⁶ Jacobs, J. (1961). *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*. New York: Random House.

3.6 Civil Groups

Under the diversity background of the modern city and society, it is very difficult to analyze the full spectrum of the individuals; therefore a group of people will be viewed as the basic social analysis unit. The city is developing and evolving during the consistent interactive process among different groups.⁵⁷ In the field of urban planning, the public participation can represent as group participation. Among them, there are two basic forms, one is community participation, and the other is The Third Sector.

The so-called community refers to an entity substance that is composited by different groups via a certain interactive mode in a certain region.⁵⁸ Every community has their own interest, roles in the city and society, which usually determine its development inclines and goals. Community participation usually refers to a policy-making process that is made via the official or unofficial cooperation among the professionals, family members, the community organization, and the administrative officers.⁵⁹ The achievement of the community participation is related to the awakening and rising of the sense of community from local residents. The sense of community is the pre-condition of the community participation and the participation can encourage the residents to deeply consider how to combine their personal interest with the future of the society and economy, thereby improving the quality of the community participation. The real participation requires the individual to have certain amounts of powers.⁶⁰ Only if a certain amount of powers are given to the individual, the equal cooperation among different stakeholder groups can be achieved. Coming into the real practice, the community

⁵⁷ Jacobs, J. (1961).

⁵⁸ Healey P. (1998). Building institutional capacity through collaborative approaches to urban planning. *Environment and Planning*, 30(9): 1531 – 1546.

⁵⁹ Healey P. (1998).

⁶⁰ Harvey D. (1988). *Social Justice and the city*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers.

organization is the basic unit of the community participation, the people who are empowered cannot always discuss with the planning bureau of the government individually thus the community organization who represents the common interests of the whole community can take such responsibility.⁶¹

The participation of the Third Sector is also an important topic. It includes all kinds of civil organizations, including the NGOs, NPOs, and other private organizations. The Third Sector was growing quickly when the public was not satisfied with traditional functions of the government, the systems of public participation, and the loss of trust with the capacity of the state in 1960s and 1970s.⁶² It provides the mediation for citizens to actively and creatively pursue the public goals. In order to ensure the sound development of the third section, the independence of the organizations need to be guaranteed in terms of the political and economic aspects. However, in modern society, the State is playing a role as “philanthropist” to support the development and enlargement of the Third Sector.⁶³ The support from the State can enhance the power of the third sector, but can also restrict it. Since many of them are supported by the state fund, the third section usually relies heavily on the state, which is very likely going to turn the organization into an “agent” of the state rather than the “partner”. In order to avoid the problem of over-dependence, the Third Sector must balance the support from the State with other resources. Only by doing that can the Third Section plays the role as a mediator between the public sector and private sectors.⁶⁴

⁶¹ Healey P. (1998).

⁶² Campell S. (1996). Green Cities, Growing Cities, Just Cities?: Urban Planning and the contradictions of Sustainable Development. *Journal of American Planning Association*, 62(3): 296-312.

⁶³ Campell S. (1996).

⁶⁴ Harvey D. (1988)

A mature society should at least have three sectors – the State, the Market, and the Third Sector. They are seeking a cooperative way to work together for the public needs, thereby boosting the development of the democracy and economy to the largest the extent.⁶⁵ What level can public participation achieves really depends on the perfection of the organization forms. A great organization forms can use all types of technical approaches to bring the public participation from the symbolizing participation into the civil rights participation.

⁶⁵ Healey P. (1998)

Chapter 4. Public Participation in Preservation Planning in China

4.1 Stakeholder Relationships in Chinese Preservation Planning Process

Some or all of following stakeholders will involve in an urban redevelopment project in China:

- State: administrative part of the government, planning bureau part of the government;
- Market: real estate developer;
- The Third Sector: scholar and professional, local inhabitant, the media, the preservation individual, the preservation organization, and international organizations.

4.1.1 State

Government (administrative): the administrative part of government means all levels of organs of government (central, provincial, municipal, district) who are rule-maker, monitor and possible implementer of planning projects. Besides, it also retains the ownership of all urban lands in China, even if the land use rights can be leased according to different land use purposes. Furthermore, the government has the power to decide the stakeholders that can involve in the redevelopment projects. Therefore, it is a stakeholder who holds most of powers.

There are five administrative levels in China. The first level is the State of Council of China, with the Premier as its highest-ranking officer. Usually, provinces are the second level of administrative bodies; however, sometimes, municipals will be established in order to regulate the unique metropolis areas. Until now, Chinese government has established four municipals. They are Beijing, Shanghai, Tianjin, and Chongqing. Provincial Cities and Municipal Districts compose the third level. City District and City County are the fourth level bodies in the system, as well as the Municipal Street Committee. While the County is often used in suburban and rural areas, the District is widely used in urbanized regions. Then, there follows Street Organization,

Town, and Municipal Residential Committee as the fifth level, with the same differentiation as District and County. Lastly, the Residential Committee and Village are the smallest administrative units.⁶⁶

| | |
|---|--|
| 1 | State |
| 2 | Province\Municipality |
| 3 | City (Provincial Level)\District (Municipal Level) |
| 4 | District (City Level)\County (City Level)\Street Committee (Municipal District Level) |
| 5 | Street Committee (City District Level)\Town (City County Level)\Residential Committee (Municipal Street Committee Level) |
| 6 | Residential Committee (City Street Committee Level)\Village (City Town Level) |

Table 4.1 The Administrative Hierarchy of China

Government (planning bureau): the planning bureau is a government-affiliated agency that is managed by the administrative part of the government. The highest-level planning bureau is Ministry of Housing and Urban-Rural Development of the People's Republic of China, which is administrated by State Council of China. This then followed by Provincial/Municipal Planning Bureau, City Planning Bureau, and District Planning Bureau. No planning unit is established in the Town/Street Committee Level.⁶⁷ Usually, the Municipal-level and City-level planning bureau has most influence on preservation planning process since they are the units who are in charge of making nearly all preservation plans. While planning unit on each level is administrated by its higher-level, the governments of the same level also administrate it at same time. Especially, in Municipal-level and City-level, the administration from local government is more powerful since it controls the appointment and assignment of officers within the bureau. This situation severely

⁶⁶ State Council of China (1985). *The Administration Level of P.R. China*. Retrieved June, 2005, in Chinese from http://www.gov.cn/test/2005-06/15/content_18253.htm

⁶⁷ Yeh, A. and Wu, F. (1999). The Transformation Of The Urban Planning System In China From A Centrally-Planned To Transitional Economy. *Progress in Planning*, 51 (3): 170-178.

impairs the planning bureau's ability to neutrally design a plan but have to weigh more on local government's desire.⁶⁸

The planning bureau is in charge of finalizing urban redevelopment plan and presenting it to People's Congress of all levels of governments for approval, as well as examining, approving, and monitoring projects during implementation of redevelopment plan.⁶⁹ Quite often, the government-owned planning institute will also be established to provide technical support of designing the redevelopment projects, with its members mainly from professionals and scholars of high institutions.⁷⁰

4.1.2 Market

Real estate developer: for a long-time, the developers are regarded the most threaten enemy of the urban built heritage. In fact, several of them sympathize or even appreciate the preservation practice of historic districts.⁷¹ However, the pursuing of the maximal economic benefits is their first priority indeed; without the pressures that created by powerful third sector organizations, not so many of them care about their responsibility towards the society, such as the establishment of foundations, the donations to homeless, etc., compared to western enterprises.

4.1.3 The Third Sector

Pro-preservation Scholars and Professionals: the pro-preservation scholars and professionals are a group who plays a critical role in advocating the preservation of historic buildings, streets, districts, and intangible heritages during urban redevelopment projects and

⁶⁸ Yeh, A. and Wu, F. (1999).

⁶⁹ Tang, K. (2004, March). Urban Planning System in China – Basic Facts and Reform Progress (in Chinese). *International Conference on China's Planning System Reform (城市规划系统改革国际论坛)*.

⁷⁰ Tang, K. (2004, March).

⁷¹ Ruan, Y. & Gu, X. (2004).

raising the preservation awareness of the general public.⁷² Learning from their research and knowledge from successful examples overseas, they greatly appreciate the importance of the historic district. For generations, they are striving for the better preservation practice and many famous contemporary preservationists come from this field. The scholars and professionals have nurtured generations of students with preservation knowledge and they have never stopped their efforts of educating government officers and developers.⁷³

Non-Government Organizations (NGOs): owing to a cultural tradition that is in favor of authorization control and the one party rule fact, the NGOs, who play a major role in preservation in United States, is extremely weak in China.⁷⁴ An organization similar to National Trust for Historic Preservation seems to be not possible under contemporary circumstance.

Local Community: ironically, the local communities, who are the main users of the buildings within the historic district, have the weakest power over the preservation planning that will happen in the place they are living.⁷⁵ Usually, organizations such as neighborhood associations are rarely organized in China due to the lack of the traditions and awareness. Also, the civil rights of the communities are not always guaranteed. While the individual protest is happening from time to time, the collective movement is still not realistic in contemporary China. The NGOs and academia are supposed to offer assistance in America; however, in China, they do not have a platform or enough power to help community to build capacities on participation.⁷⁶

Media: the media in China has different attitudes towards redevelopment projects and weaker stakeholders such as local community. In China, most of the media are still controlling by

⁷² Li, X. (2005).

⁷³ Ruan Y. & Sun M. (2001).

⁷⁴ Wang, G., Xiao, M. (2007 February). Enlightenment of Western Urban on Chinese Urban Planning Practice Planning History (in Chinese). *City Planning Review* (城市规划评论), 31(2), 24-32.

⁷⁵ Li, X. (2005).

⁷⁶ Li, X. (2005).

the State. Therefore, the extent of the criticism or suggestions the media can express varies according to the tolerance levels of governments in different regions.⁷⁷ A few media did play a role in questioning and criticizing the injustice of planning projects and its negative impact on historic resources while most of them still choose to express the voices of government. For example, Southern Weekly, a Weekly newspaper that is managed by Southern Newspaper Group and Government of Guangdong Province, wrote a whole section to questions the fake reconstruction of “historic” buildings in Qianmen Avenue in Beijing before 2008 Olympics and it quickly generated supporters from academia and professionals to urge the government to reconsider the plan; however, there seemed to have few Beijing local medias to follow their coverage since it was a project that was highly recommended by Beijing Municipal Government in their master plan to construct a new Beijing.⁷⁸

International Preservation Organization: the current projects of International Preservation Organizations in Chinese are still mostly focusing on the historic building conservations. In the last several years, community participation projects in Chinese historic sites have been initiated by a few international organizations; however, no evidence shows the deep involvement of those organizations in the typical redevelopment planning projects that are mentioned above.

⁷⁷ Tang, K (2004)

⁷⁸ The original articles on Southern Weekly have been deleted on their website. The project can be searched via search engine; however, the contents are no longer accessible.

4.2 Case Studies

In order to analyze and summarize the overall characters of Preservation Planning experience in China, five typical cases that were mentioned in Chapter 2 will be examined in terms of organizational and institutional relations behind cases.

4.2.1 Sanfangqixiang Historic District in Fuzhou City, Fujian Province

Fujian Province is located in southeast coastal areas of China. It is one of the earliest provinces that opened its local economy to attract capitals from Hongkong, Macau, Taiwan, and Countries all over the world.⁷⁹ During the early period of economic reform, the government adapted a very aggressive policy to attract the international capitals to involve in the real estate market. Fuzhou, as the capital city of the Fujian Province, becomes an important market for those investors, under such circumstance.

⁷⁹ Guan, X. (2010). Keep Some Memories for the City- Investigation of the Actuality of the Three Lanes and Seven Alleys and Some suggestions for its Protection (in Chinese). *Fujian Architecture and Construction* (福建建筑), 99(4): 36-38.



Figure 4.1 The Geographic Location of Sanfangqixiang Area (Source: Google Earth)

Sanfangqixiang is located in the downtown area of Fuzhou city. It has a significant history for famous revolutionists and reformers who have contributed to the modern revolution of China to

defeat the federalism Qing Dynasty and build a Republic.⁸⁰ Also, the buildings in the region itself have unique characters of traditional Chinese vernacular buildings on the south of the Yangtze River.⁸¹ However, with the overpopulation and lack of the maintenance for decades, the historic district has turned into urban slums with lagged infrastructure and bad living conditions.⁸²



Figure 4.2 The Aerial View of Sanfangqixiang Area (Source: Sanfangqixiang.com)

⁸⁰ Chen, L. (2008). Historical Preservation Concept - A Case Study of Sanfang-Qixiang Conservation Plan of Fuzhou City (in Chinese). *Planners (规划师)*, 24(8): 32-36.

⁸¹ Chen, L. (2008).

⁸² Guan, X. (2010).



Figure 4.3. Typical Vernacular Building from Inside (Source: Author)

Moreover, the historic district itself is located just beside the traditional commercial districts of Fuzhou City. Thus the land values at the district are evidently higher than other regions of the city. In 1990, due to its high commercial value, it attracted a Hongkong developer's interest to purchase the land and then turn it into a large shopping center. This proposal perfectly matched the goals of local government, who regarded as a region that is totally unsuitable for the goal of modern development in China and these cramped and ugly old houses should be replaced by brand-new shopping centers and high-rise apartment buildings.⁸³

Furthermore, at that time, the tax reform has just initiated and local government, for the first time, has their rights to collect tax revenues that are allowed not to submit to the national

⁸³ Chen, L. (2008).

treasure. The revenues that have been collected by selling the land use rights are too huge that it is an offer that can seldom be turned down by the local government.⁸⁴

At last, the local government sold part of land in the historic district to the real estate developer at a huge price and then approved the developer's plan to build a large shopping center at that area.⁸⁵ Under the redevelopment policy that has been enacted by the local government, the local community was forced to relocate to a designated place that is far away from the city center with a small amount of compensation.

The residents have no choices but to follow government's instructions. Although a certain amount of old city residents are not willing to move, most of people choose to sign the agreement, with a beautiful promise that made by the government to give them a modern and advanced living place. There was a movement organized by scholars in the universities who regarded these historic buildings as the fossil of the Fuzhou City's history and they could not be turned down.⁸⁶ They wrote letters to the high-ranking government officers in hope of obstructing the planning decision. However, those scholars are labeled as an "old antique" that cannot follow the trend of the country, where the economic development and the collection of the wealthy are the main concern of the Chinese people who have suffered long-time poverty for decades.⁸⁷

Fortunately, after two lanes and one alley have been completely torn down. The real estate developer suddenly suffer from lack of development fund thus have to suspend his project. And in 2003, he resold the land back to the government, who was aspired by the huge success of

⁸⁴ Wu, X. Regain Energy, Primary Analysis of Historic Area Protection and Renovation Mode by Example of Three Alleys and Seven Lanes in Fuzhou (in Chinese). *Urban Plan Landscape Architecture (城市规划景观与建筑)*, 25(3): 83-85.

⁸⁵ Wu, X. (2005).

⁸⁶ Ruan, Y. & Gu, X. (2004)

⁸⁷ Guan, X. (2010)

Xintiandi Project in Shanghai and plan to renovate buildings along the main streets and reuse them as a fake historic commercial street to attract visitors. The project has been completed in 2007 and now the fake place is regarded as the must-see tourism attractions of Fuzhou's glorious history.⁸⁸



Figure 4.4 The Nanhou Street after Restoration (Source: Sanfangqixiang.com)

4.2.2 “Xintiandi” Project, Luwan District, Shanghai

“Xintiandi” locates in the old French concession, which is one of the most prosperous regions in Shanghai except for the Bund. The buildings there are famous for its Shikumen architecture style, a style that retains both the details of English worker's house and Chinese philosophy's building construction.⁸⁹ Moreover, it is the place that contains the building where the first meeting of the Chinese Communist Party was held. Thus it is also regarded as a historic district with glorious communism revolutionary histories.

⁸⁸ Fuzhou Planning Bureau. *Sanfangqixiang Project*. Retrieved in Chinese from <http://ghj.fuzhou.gov.cn/>.

⁸⁹ He, S. & Wu F. (2005). Property-Led Redevelopment in Post-Reform China: A Case Study of Xintiandi Redevelopment Project in Shanghai. *Journal of Urban Affairs*, 27(1): 1-23.

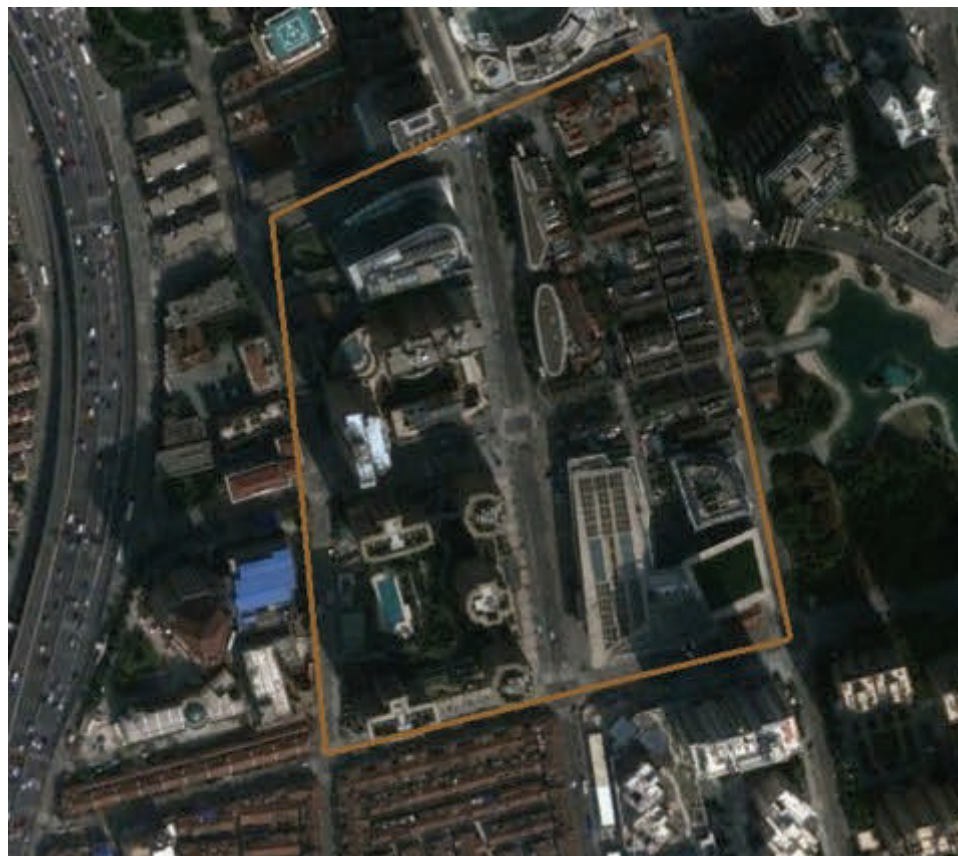
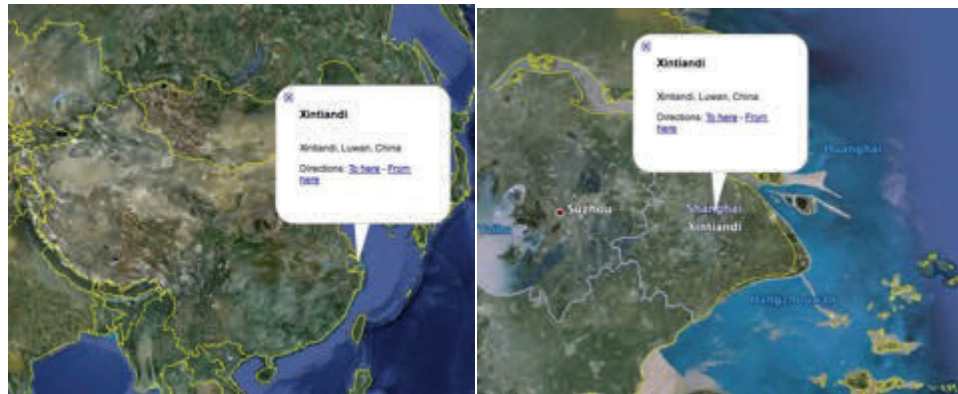


Figure 4.5 The Geographic Location of Xintiandi, Shanghai (Source: Google Earth)



Figure 4.6 An Example of Restored Shikumen House (Source: Author)



Figure 4.7 Commercial Development in Xintiandi (Source: Author)



Figure 4.8 The First Meeting House of Chinese Communist Party (Source: Author)

In 1995, a Hong Kong real estate group expressed strong interest on this place due to its locations of the city and proposed to apply the renovation approaches on the historic district in order to transform the residential area into a great tourism attractions with commercial and entertainment functions; meanwhile, a place that can experience Shanghai's unique history.⁹⁰ In fact, what attracts the developer most was not the Xintiandi itself, but the huge value increasing potentials of the real estate properties surround this place.

The local government was also in favor of this proposal, which not only can generate huge tax revenues and simulate the local economy and job markets, but also to keep the pressure away from demolishing historic buildings which will offend the scholars and medias who are trying to defend it from commercial redevelopment.⁹¹

⁹⁰ Ruan, Y. & Sun, M. (2001).

⁹¹ Mo, T. & Lu, D. (2000). Regeneration of Urban Form of Shanghai Lilong - Conservative Development of Xintiandi (in Chinese). *Time+Architecture (时间与建筑)*, 12(3): 12-15.

The project was quickly approved with a relocation policy that has been made to accommodate the people who will move out the district. New high-rises were built on other parts of the city for the residents to buy in extreme low prices.⁹² Until 1997, the projects have been finished with a portion of Lilong houses being demolished and the rest was carefully renovated.

The original exterior of the Lilong was preserved with a completely rebuilt of the building interior. Various retailers have been attracted to move in at a favored price and the marketing was conducted nationally and internationally.⁹³ For a long time it was regarded as an excellent urban redevelopment examples since it not only provided a great idea on how to boost local economic development but also solved the preservation issue of historic buildings. In a short period, Xintiandi project has been copied by so many other cities in China.

However, instead of the optimistic attitude by government, the scholars expressed a cautious attitude towards this new approach. A lot of articles have been published to provide retrospective views of the Xintiandi project. Many problems have been indicated from this approach and one of the scholars even regarded a project that should not be replicated simply.⁹⁴ The authenticity is the issue that has been debated most. Apparently, after the renovation, the original urban fabric has been completely changed. The exterior was repaired with contemporary materials, which completely lost the feeling of its existence in the history.

Still, most of articles were focusing on the conservation issues, while they neglected the stories of local communities within the whole planning projects.⁹⁵ Although they may be treated

⁹² Mo, T. & Lu, D. (2000).

⁹³ He, S. & Wu F. (2005).

⁹⁴ Ruan, Y. & Song, N. (2007). Preservation Planning of Chinese Historic Blocks (in Chinese). *Urban Planning Review* (城市规划评论), 6(16): 46-52.

⁹⁵ Ruan, Y. & Song, N. (2007).

with better government policy compared with Fuzhou city, the residents still have to leave the place they have been living for generations. The local residents are an essential element in order to maintain the historic feelings of a historic place. With the lost of its original inhabitants, the unique city culture in Shanghai was lost at the same time.

This is a lose-lose situation for both the historic district and the communities, even if a portion of so-called historic buildings were claimed by the government that still be greatly renovated there and become a great house museum for people to experience the old Shanghai.⁹⁶

4.2.3 Ju'er Hutong, Dongcheng District, Beijing

Ju'er Hutong locates in Dongcheng District that is to the east of Beijing. With its west bound by Nanluogu Lane, a famous "Xintiandi" type redevelopment that also achieved huge success, and the east by Jiaodaokou South Street. "Hutong" is a traditional neighborhood unit that was used widely in northern China, which usually contains a small street and the courtyard buildings alongside.

⁹⁶ Ruan, Y. & Song, N. (2007).

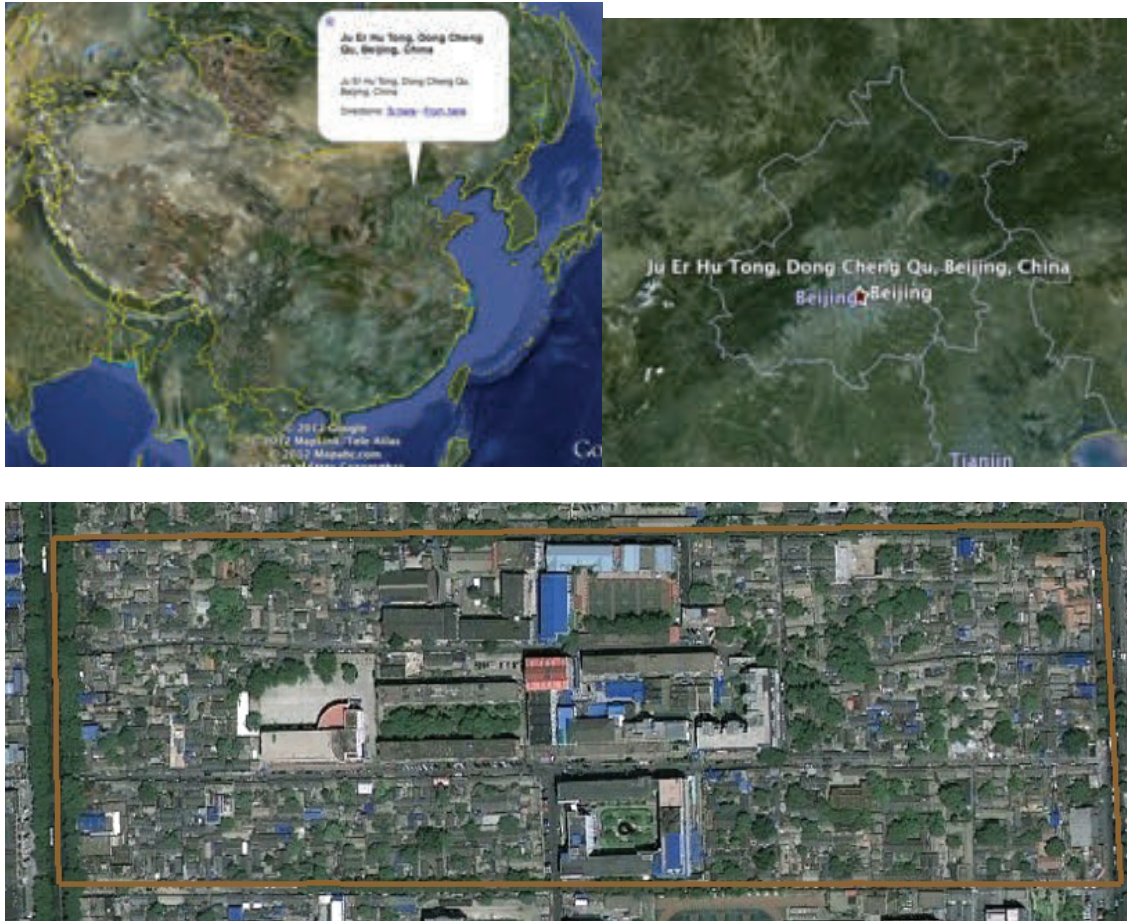


Figure 4.9 The Location of Ju'er Hutong Area (Source: Google Earth)



Figure 4.10 The Urban Pattern of Hutong on the Southeast corner of Ju'er Hutong Area (Source: Google Earth)

In the past, Ju'er Hutong, together with several other Hutongs aligning the Nanluogu Lane, was the high-end residential area for Manchurian families that has blood ties with the royal

families. For hundreds of years, numerous ministers and high-ranking officers of Qing Dynasty was born and raise here.⁹⁷ However, after 1911, the establishment of the Republic of China, the low income Han Chinese people from the south city started to move in and Ju'er Hutong thus gradually turned into the place for old Beijing residents.⁹⁸



Figure 4.11 Aerial View of Ju'er Hutong (Source: Beijing Tourism Bureau)

⁹⁷ Wu, L. (1999). *Rehabilitating the Old City of Beijing: A Project in the Ju'Er Hutong*. Beijing: UBS Press.

⁹⁸ Wu, L. (1999)



Figure 4.12 The Street View of Ju'er Hutong (Source: Author)

The courtyard buildings alongside the Hutong are masterpiece of northern Chinese vernacular buildings in Ming and Qing Dynasty. Various types of courtyard buildings in the Hutong, including the royal style courtyard, the minister style courtyard, and the normal resident's style courtyard, represents the transitions of history over several hundred years.

However, in early 1980s, suffering from nearly 100 year's turbulence due to the war and the Cultural Revolution, the masterpieces of the Chinese vernacular buildings have been deteriorated without any maintenance.⁹⁹ The electric poles and telephone lines were built anywhere to connect the old houses to modern life; and the road was turned into mud during the raining season every summer.

⁹⁹ Wu, L. (1999)

In 1987, Wu Liangyong, the professor of architecture in Qinghua University and the student of Liang Sicheng, the greatest architect in modern Chinese history, was appointed by the government to renovate the Hutong.¹⁰⁰ The basic infrastructure, including electricity, drinking water, roads for vehicles, was built first. Then a new approach – to demolish the old ones and build new multi-floor courtyard buildings was taken. On the basis of the holistic renovation of the tradition structure, two or three floors were constructed to transform the old single-floor courtyard buildings to new multi-floor in order to accommodate the original residents while at the same time providing larger living areas per square foot for each people.¹⁰¹

The government approved the design and then started to manage its implementation, with the investment partly from the government tax revenues and partly from the collective fund of local communities. The real estate developer was excluded during the whole process.¹⁰² Moreover, due to the complexity of the housing ownership of the courtyard houses, the community was allowed and encouraged to trade the house property rights if the household would like to move away.

The scholar group, including Professor Wu Liangyong and his students in Tsinghua University, were actively participating in the design and monitoring work during the construction. The government would consult them in order to make sure the building was correctly repaired and the add-on floors would not impair the original housing structure.¹⁰³

However, the community still did not participate in the project design process. Even if the residents can determine whether to stay or move out, they were forced to live in the new style

¹⁰⁰ Wu, L. (1999)

¹⁰¹ Wu, L. (1999)

¹⁰² Zhang, Y. & Fang, K. (2002). Politics of housing redevelopment in China: The rise and fall of the Ju'er Hutong project in Inner-city Beijing. *Journal of Housing and the Built Environment*, 18(1): 75-81.

¹⁰³ Zhang, Y. & Fang, K. (2002).

courtyard buildings that only have the similarities of the exterior.¹⁰⁴ Although the living conditions were greatly improved after the reconstruction, the new buildings were regarded by them as either not old or not new, a weird combination. The buildings may perfect fit for its aesthetic criteria in terms of preservation traditional urban fabric; nonetheless, the original users' opinions on their dream types of houses were not even considered.¹⁰⁵

4.2.4 Tianzifang, Luwan District, Shanghai

Tianzifang is located in No 211, Taikang Road. Taikang Road is a small street in the Dapugiao Area of Luwan District. It used to be a very busy street market with dirt road. In 1998, the government enacted the regulation to transform the busy but dirty streetscape into a street to develop the traditional culture industry, a street with artists. Among all projects in this Road, the Tianzifang is absolutely the most successful one with a different redevelopment approach from "Xintiandi" project.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁴ Zhang, Y. & Fang, K. (2002).

¹⁰⁵ Xu, X. (2003). A New Perspective of Renewal in Residential Areas of Chinese Old Cities—Analysis of Supporting House and New Courtyard House of Ju'er Hutong (in Chinese). *New Architecture (新建筑)*, 2(6): 70-75.

¹⁰⁶ Ke, X., Yu, H. & Dan Xiong. (2011). The Protection of Characteristic Streets in Modern City: A Case Study of Shanghai Tianzifang (in Chinese). *Huazhong Architecture (华中建筑)*, 46(9): 20-25.

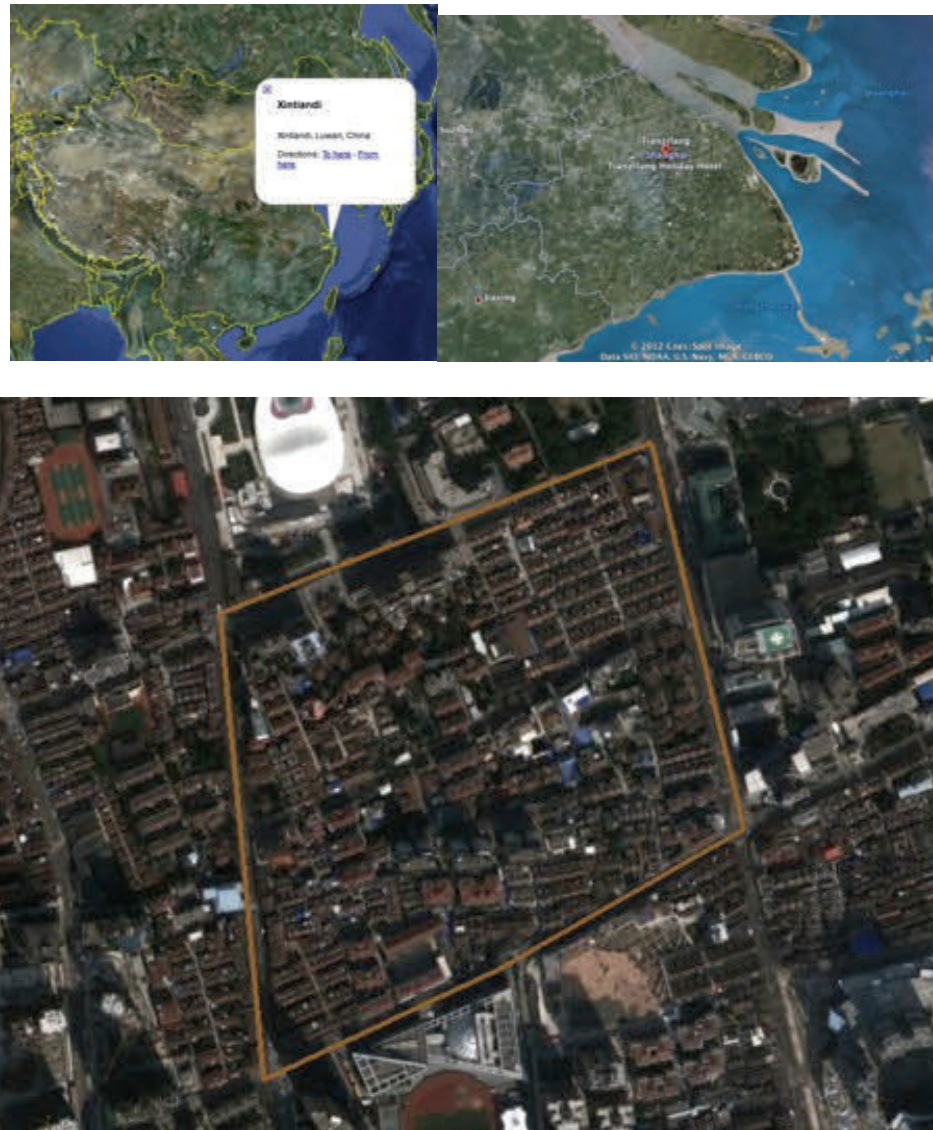


Figure 4.13 The Geographic Location of Tianzifang Area (Source: Google Earth)

Historically, Tianzifang area is located in the transitional area between the French Concession and the Chinese cities, thus the Shikumen houses in the area reveals a character of mixture occupation. The high-end French-style multi-floor Shikumen houses were mixed with

old style Shikimen that were sheltering the low-income Chinese residents.¹⁰⁷ It is called Lilong museum since it contained Lilong of different styles from different historic periods, including the urban slums, Shikimen buildings, western style mansions and small Lilong factories. Moreover, due to its location, it used to be an area that resided white-collar Chinese populations in old Shanghai. Accompanying with the trend, the entertainment industry was highly developed as well as the creative industry.¹⁰⁸



Figure 4.14 The Entrance of Tianzifang Area (Source: Author)

¹⁰⁷ Tianzifang Official Website. *Introduction of Tianzifang*. Retrieved in Chinese from <http://www.tianzifang.cn/>.

¹⁰⁸ Ke, X., Yu, H. & Dan Xiong. (2011).



Figure 4.15 Commercial Development in Traditional Lilong Scale (Source: Author)



Figure 4.16 The Traditional Lilong Life Continues (Source: Author)

The restoration project of Lilong buildings in Tianzifang area was initiated in 1998 and finished in 2000 and the revitalization project continued with the art studios and creative retail stores gradually establishing in the area. Different from other projects, the main goal of the project is to revive its historic spirits after many years' deterioration, instead of urban renewal or renovation.¹⁰⁹ The old Lilong houses and the industrial buildings in early 1900s were transformed into the studio of artists and the retail stores of creative products. Tax-deduction

¹⁰⁹ Yu, H. (2011). Narration of Historic Block Renovation in Power and Concept Dimensions: Case of Tianzifang in Shanghai (in Chinese). *Social Sciences in Nanjing* (南京社会科学), 6(4): 34-37.

policies were made to attract the artists to move in, as well as the starters that are in favor of creative industry. The exterior of those historic buildings were maintained to keep its original texture while the modern infrastructure was redesigned to accommodate the modern use.¹¹⁰ The urban fabric remained unchanged in terms of the scale of the streets and lanes in traditional Lilong neighborhood.

Talking about stakeholders, the local government initiated the construction of the streets with characters in their long-term master plan in 1998. The infrastructure surrounded the Tianzifang area was reconstructed before the project to provide car assessable road systems.¹¹¹ A Creative Industry Company was introduced to redesign the area as a whole for the adaptive reuse of historic buildings.

The local communities were encouraged to stay by renting part of the lilong house to the artists and retailers so that they will benefit from the development. Certainly they are also encouraged to invest the creative industry if they are willing to. Several years after the project, a certain amount of artists, including the famous painter and exhibitor CHEN Yifei and ER Dongqiang, have moved into their art studio to this place where used to be a Lilong factory. Also, the developer proposed a design that can minimize the affect the tourism industry could do to interrupt the peaceful life of the local residents and to make sure the Lilong life style continues everyday in Tianzifang.¹¹²

Different from the other projects, the local communities are critical elements in the whole planning process in order to make sure the success of the project. Although the revival of the place may contains other purposes such as tourism development, local economy reform, etc.,

¹¹⁰ Yu, H. (2011).

¹¹¹ Yu, H. (2009). Tianzifang Experiment: the City Renewal Model Superseding the Binary Opposition of a Place (in Chinese). *China Ancient City (中国古城)*, 7(7): 12-17.

¹¹² Ruan, Y. & Song, N. (2007).

however, the desire of the communities were considered for the first time.¹¹³ Having said that, what is missing is still a community organization that can negotiate with local authorities or development companies. Although the community-favored policy may be in use at current time, the continuity of it is in question. Moreover, the gentrification process seems to be avoidable in Tianzifang, a large number of local residents have moved out of the Lilong for various reasons, which can be a long-term threat to the sustainable development of the community and to ensure the Lilong spirit was inherited to the next generations.¹¹⁴

4.2.5 Pingyao City, Shan'xi Province

Pingyao City is located in the central of Shan'xi Province, a province in central north of China, and 94 kilometers' south to the capital city – Taiyuan City.

¹¹³ Ruan, Y. & Song, N. (2007).

¹¹⁴ Li, Z., Wu, F. & Hanlong Lu. (2004). Socio-Spatial Differentiation In China: A Case Study Of Three Neighbourhoods In Shanghai (in Chinese). *City Planning Review (城市规划评论)*, 8(6): 70-74.



Figure 4.17 The Geographic Location of Pingyao Ancient City (Source: Google Earth)

Pingyao City is the most well preserved ancient China; it is an excellent sample of the customs and rules of urban setting of Han Chinese ancient cities, which has been passed down

for more than two thousand years.¹¹⁵ The ancient city wall that was constructed more than seven hundred years ago surrounds Pingyao City. The courtyard buildings in the ancient city is a typical example of ancient Northern Han Chinese People style buildings, at the same time, they also adapt themselves very well to the local natural environment, where the sand storms are blown from the Mongolian highland every winter.



Figure 4.18 The City Wall of Pingyao (Source: Lu Chongyi)

¹¹⁵ Ruan Y. (1999). *Preservation Planning of Historic and Cultural Significant Cities (in Chinese)*. Beijing: China Higher Education Press (北京高等教育出版社).



Figure 4.19 A Typical Courtyard House in Pingyao (Source: Lu Chongyi)



Figure 4.20 The Main Commercial Street of Pingyao (Source: LU Chongyi)



Figure 4.21 Rishengchang Bank, the First Modern Bank in China (Source: LU Chongyi)

Thanks to timely action by Professor RUAN Yisan from Tongji University in Shanghai, the ancient city redevelopment project was suspended in 1983; a year that is earlier than most of the urban development projects have been initiated and the historic buildings were demolished.¹¹⁶ Afterwards, RUAN managed to persuade the Pingyao city government to approve his preservation plan of Pingyao City, a plan with holistic preservation strategy being conducted in the ancient city and all new developments being planned in the new city that is to the west and east of the ancient counterparts.

In addition, the “Regulations of Preserving Pingyao Ancient City” was enacted in 1987 and a large scale of renovation project was initiated at the same time in order to save the old buildings

¹¹⁶ Ruan Y. (1999).

that were in danger and improve the living conditions of the local residents. In 1997, the Pingyao ancient city was listed as a world heritage site.¹¹⁷

The Pingyao city government plays a critical role in the management of the Pingyao ancient city. Owing the efforts of the Professor RUAN Yisan and the Tongji University, the local government has realized the importance of preserving ancient city in 1980s and started to enact regulations to protect the built heritage.¹¹⁸ Under the regulations, no mass scale real estate development was allowed in the city thus the real estate developer was completely excluded. Moreover, in order to monitor the implementation of master plan and the regulations, the Ancient City Management Office was established in order to better manage the historic resources and regulate the tourism development in the ancient city.¹¹⁹

Scholars and students from Tongji University, who regard the preservation as the top priority, designed nearly all long-term and short-term master plans. They have devoted a large effort to ensure that the development of tourism industry was regarded as a mean to assist the preservation, not vice versa.¹²⁰

However, still the drawbacks of the whole preservation strategies were also the neglect of the local communities, who are the actual users of the city in their daily lives. The tourism industry seems to become a key industry for local economy.¹²¹ Most of the residents have involved in the tourism business more or less. However, with the flux of the visitors and invasion

¹¹⁷ Ruan Y. (1999).

¹¹⁸ Ruan Y. (1999).

¹¹⁹ Ruan Y. (1994). *Six Memories of Chinese Ancient City (in Chinese)*. Beijing: China Higher Education Press (北京高等教育出版社).

¹²⁰ Ruan Y. (1994).

¹²¹ Cui, F. & Meng J. (1999). Research On The Design And Enforcement Methods Of Tourist Identity About Chinese Historical And Cultural Cities: A Case Study Of Pingyao Ancient City (in Chinese). *Human Geography (人文地理)*, 1(2): 10-16.

of the modern life, to what extent can them preserve the traditions is a question. Also, not all residents can benefit from economic development; they were attracted by job opportunities, modern life, and high-rise living styles in the new city and moved away during mid-1980s.¹²²

Also, different from the residents in metropolis, such as Beijing and Shanghai, the residents in the ancient city have suffered from long-term poverty and yearned for gaining wealthier after the economic reform. Most of the residents at that time did not possess enough awareness or education for the significance of the historic cities; therefore, even the lowest level of the participation could not be fulfilled at that time. They were fortunately to have the ancient cities being preserved by the local government and scholars even if they were excluded in the original planning process.¹²³

Nonetheless, the residents were given out their fates of the future to be determined by other stakeholders.

¹²² Cui, F. & Meng J. (1999).

¹²³ Ruan, Y. (1999).

4.3 The Overall Stakeholder Relations in Chinese Urban Redevelopment Project

Under current top-down system, the government (administrative and planning bureau) and real estate developer are two most powerful stakeholders within the urban redevelopment planning system. Either government or real estate developer or both initiated nearly all of the urban redevelopment projects. The recognition of significance of built heritage and the basic rights of local residents can greatly affect the enactment of policies or the design of planning projects. According to the results of different case studies that have been discussed above, the initial attitude towards the built heritage and the incorporation of it into local master plan led to results with huge difference in terms of how to tackle with historic buildings.

The fact that, the government, especially the administrative part, has the power of making decision has been fully recognized by all other stakeholders. The real estate developers consider the government as the most critical stakeholder or the only stakeholder that should be lobbied. The developers have several fairly persuasive bargaining counters on their side. Among them two are most powerful and have been used most. One is a great vision of the economic booming that can be generated large-scale real estate development projects, as well as employment opportunities; the other one is the huge capitals that the government can acquire by selling land-use rights at auction and collecting taxes, such as real estate tax, sales tax, business tax, etc. Both of the counters are offers that a government with the goal of development economy cannot turn down; therefore, the alliance of local government and real estate developers are a common cooperation within redevelopment projects, including Xintiandi, Tianzifang, Sanfangqixiang cases.

The scholars and students in the university are the most active preservation groups in China and have constituted the vast majority of preservation professionals. They seek an active participation in redevelopment projects via different approaches. Some of professionals seek to

affect redevelopment policies through advocating and education. A case in point is how Professor RUAN Yisan successfully saved Pingyao City through advocating the significance of preserving the ancient city.¹²⁴ A certain number of Professors and Students are members of the Planning Institutes that either was set up by the government or was affiliated to the local community. Over there, they are hiring as long-term contractors once the government needs the design of redevelopment plan. Since nearly all master plans are produced by those institutes, via having preservation sections to be listed as the one of top priorities of historic district redevelopment, the professionals can affect the government decision making during plan design process. Moreover, several veteran scholars will take positions as consultants of projects. Usually, the opinions of scholars towards projects are well taken into consideration. However, their impacts are being weighed more in the planning reports rather than actual fieldwork. The local government may still modify the plan during the implementation process.¹²⁵

In most cases, the local residents are excluded from policy-making process. The top-down system determines the government would like to achieve the ideal redevelopment goals by following master plans or even the visions of chief government officers or designers rather than actual desire of local communities. During the implementation, the participation of the local inhabitants would have to follow the overall redevelopment plan of the government no matter it is beneficial to them or plays a negative role.¹²⁶ For the local communities themselves, a majority of them still has not fully realized the significance of preserving built heritages and do not know how to participate in. The civil society is extremely weak in China thus the residents do

¹²⁴ Ruan, Y. & Song, N. (2007).

¹²⁵ Ruan, Y. & Song, N. (2007).

¹²⁶ Ruan, Y. & Song, N. (2007).

not have necessary willingness and capacity to set up an organization to negotiate with other more powerful stakeholders.

Furthermore, since the lagging behind infrastructure has existed there for many years. The yearning of the modern life within their heart surpasses the recognition of the preservation. The situation is turning increasingly worse due to a large number of population flows from the countryside to the city. Due to the relatively low rental price, the traditional old area of city becomes their first choice.¹²⁷ As immigrants from other part of the country, they have no affiliations with built heritages in historic district and unique city characters that will be cherished by old residents that have been living here for generations.

The Media, Preservation Individuals, and NGOs should be a strong alliance of the local community to counter balance the powers of the government and real estate developers. Among them, the most active group in China is the media of all kinds. They are playing a role in monitoring the preservation of historic district and advocating the boycott of demolition plan that proposed by real estate developers. Certainly, not all media will support preservation ideas but in China the media successfully play a certain amount of tasks that should have been done by large NGOs in the western countries.

The preservation NGOs is still a blank spot in the redevelopment planning system, which is mainly because of lack of traditions to have NGOs in a country that has authorization political system for more than two thousand years. In contemporary situation, under the background of pursuing absolute stability of the society in order to sustain the sharp conflicts that are caused by the unbalanced economic development between the urban and the rural and the rich and poor, the party and government still express a cautious attitude towards the impact the NGOs

¹²⁷ Ruan, Y. & Song, N. (2007).

can bring to Chinese society and worry about social upheaval they may cause. Therefore, strict regulations have been enacted in order to restrict and monitor the development of NGOs, especially during the decisions of allocating annual financial support.¹²⁸

Under such circumstance, most of the existing NGOs in China are trying to avoid sensitive topics, such as human rights, the self-governing of ethnic minorities, or spreading religious beliefs, in order to receive financial supports from the government to sustain their daily operation. A few small scale NGOs have been established in big cities such as Beijing, Shanghai, and Guangzhou, with the main goals of conducting education of the importance of the preservation and raising the awareness of conserving urban heritages from every strata of the society.¹²⁹

¹²⁸ Li, X. (2005)

¹²⁹ Li, X. (2005)

Chapter 5. The Application of American Public Participation Experience to Chinese Situation

5.1 The Opportunities

5.1.1 The Desire of Democracy in City

More than thirty years economic development becomes a catalyst for the social development. The awakening of the civil rights of Chinese citizens is an unstoppable trend that has already started to impact every sectors of the Chinese society. In terms of the urban planning practice, compared to the passive acceptance of planning in the past, the residents, especially those have direct interest in the planning, begin to actively express opinions of the planning and question the related regulations by the government. Although, the practice is still far from the real public participation that to bring the public into decision-making process, the transition from passive acceptance to active participation is still a huge process in a strict top-down system and has the possibility to become a prototype to formulate a mature civil society in China.¹³⁰

In addition, the recognition of the self-determine rights can also propel the planners to consider more of the desires of the public, especially the local communities, in the planning projects instead of their own thoughts. Furthermore, different from the redevelopment projects in western countries, the process of Chinese projects usually accompanied with a large portion of relocation of old residents and the move-in of new residents.¹³¹ Therefore, the planners should hear voices from both sides during the plan-making process.

¹³⁰ Ren, G. (2000). Public Participation in Urban Planning of China (in Chinese). *Planners (规划师)*, 16(5), 73-75

¹³¹ Li, X. (2005).

5.1.2 The Emergence of the Third Sector

Due to the emergence of the civil society and desire of people to pursue democracy, the third sector starts to grow in China. Although the preservation NGOs, NPOs, and community organizations have a strong potential to develop in the future, how to develop the NGOs under strict government regulations in contemporary China is an issue that has to be considered. The preservation professional league is a more practical solution. Since the professionals themselves have already been awarded the power from the government thus their alliance will be much more powerful than a pure grassroots organization and more acceptable by the government.¹³² In addition, the professionals can provide guidance for establishing the community organizations, which not only manage the organizations to develop smartly in a government tolerable level, but also can development a solid relationship with local communities in order to planning work that reflects the desire of the local communities. However, it is still a long way since most of planners in China lack education and awareness on serving the local communities. The plan usually represents their own intentions or plan from government officers, instead of the desire of local residents, who are actual users of the area after the redevelopment.¹³³

5.1.3 The Distinctiveness of Urban Past

The issue of “Thousands Cities with the Same Skyline” is debated heatedly in the past decade, which means that most of the Chinese cities, to varied extents, have lost their characters of the cityscape. “Assume that you are standing on a street that is surrounded by modern high-rises in any Chinese cities, sometimes it is very hard for you to tell which city it is if you are not living there for a while.”¹³⁴ The cause of this issue is because the loss of historic

¹³² Li, X. (2005).

¹³³ Yeh, A. & Wu, F. (1999).

¹³⁴ Ruan, Y. & Gu, X. (2004).

buildings, streets, and districts in the last thirty years, which are supposed to be showcases of the unique histories of the city and urban fabric of the historic city planning. The gap between the new and old buildings disrupts the inheritance of the city spirit. Therefore, a strong desire of seeking their cities' past has been spread among the citizens, especially the increasing amount of middle classes in China. The timing to have huge social movement to preserve urban heritage is mature. The different citizen groups have the willing to participate in preservation planning, what lacks now is a platform for them to express their opinions and negotiate a common sense of the objectives to preserve and the tools that can utilized. Every year there are several conferences for professionals to exchange experiences on this topic; however, no conference has been held with its target at other groups.¹³⁵

5.1.4 The Development of Digital Media

As it was mentioned in the analysis above, the media is always the most critical and powerful groups among all groups. In China, the media is always awarded the responsibility to monitor the government acts and the social injustice. The media includes newspaper, journals, press, TV companies, and Internet Medias. Of course, not all of them will advocate preservation; however, still many of them are stick their neutral positions to point out the dark side of the redevelopment projects, even if they are under a heavy pressure of the government who is still controlling the media in China.¹³⁶ Moreover, the emergence of the social media industry in China propels its further development. With the low cost platform and the most accessible channel of the Internet, the individuals are empowered and able to form groups on the social media platform to discuss the government policies and negotiate the collective reaction towards

¹³⁵ Li, X. (2005).

¹³⁶ Lee, C. (2005). *Chinese Media, Global Contexts* (2nd ed.). New York, United States: Routledge. (Original work published 2003).

them.¹³⁷ Among the popular social media platforms, the microblog (called Weibo in Chinese) has the largest user groups (Two hundred million people in early 2012). The reason why it becomes popular is because the microblog enables the citizens to express their opinions (especially political), which is hardly to be completely articulated in other channels. Moreover, it is very hard to monitor on the Internet. Thus the public can utilize the social media platform to form virtual group to express opinions on preservation projects and to discuss the collective movement to obstruct the demolition of historic buildings.

5.1.5 The International Aids

Several American NGOs have started to involve in the preservation projects in China. For example, The New York based World Monument Fund is assisting the restoration of Qianlong Garden within Forbidden City in Beijing and the San Francisco based Global Heritage Fund is working with Chinese universities on restoring traditional courtyards in Datong City, a World Heritage Site in Shanxi Province. However, most of them are concentrating on the actual conservation work of architectural heritage instead of educating and increasing public awareness. If the public participation is going to be included, then the participation awareness of the civil society should be raised, which may not improve the preservation practice in China immediately; nonetheless, when looking at the long-term future, it has the potential to bring fundamental changes to the stakeholder relationships in Chinese urban redevelopment practices. The American preservation organization that have rich experience on international projects, can definitely bring the western experience of public participation into China and nurture and guide the development of preservation non-profits in China.

¹³⁷ Lagerkvist, J. (2011). *After the Internet, Before Democracy: Competing Norms in Chinese Media and Society* (1st ed.). New York, United States: Peter Lang.

5.1.6 The Scholars, Professors, and Students

The past decade witnesses the increasing number of the students who decide to devote themselves into the urban planning field and many of them turn into preservationists after the graduation. The Tongji University, which has one of the best urban planning programs in China, has already set up the historic preservation undergraduate major. The success and failure experience in public participation in the western countries is a very important lesson for them to learn in order to further explore the future path of the preservation planning in China, the public participation is an important topic that needs to be paid special attention. Besides, each year, hundreds of graduates are studying in developed countries or receive a preservation-related degree, from universities in Japan, Hongkong, Singapore, United States, or Europe.¹³⁸ As a group of people who receive education both in western countries and China, they are the future leaders of the Chinese preservation field and can become ambassadors to advocate the public participation ideas in the urban redevelopment projects. Certainly, these students can also trigger the potential cooperation between the Chinese universities and their foreign counterparts; therefore, the theory and practice of the Chinese preservation can improve evidently under an international environment.

5.2 Potential Obstacles

5.2.1 Government's Concern on Democracy

After thirty years' development, the income gap between the rich and poor has reached a dangerous critical point. According to the report of the World Bank, the Gini Co-efficient, an index to symbolize the degree of the gap between the rich and poor, reached 0.55 as of 2011, which

¹³⁸ Li, X. (2005)

was ranked as the fourth place among all countries in the world.¹³⁹ According the long-term statistic studies, once the Coefficient has passed 0.55, then the whole country is on the edge of the mass scale unrest due to the deep controversy between the rich and poor. Therefore, the Chinese is extremely cautious on any possible issues that can lead to the instability of the society.¹⁴⁰ Under such background, to enable the quick development of the Third Sector in a short time is probably an unrealistic goal. The worrying of civil organizations become more powerful is current government's attitude, since the trend may publicize and aggravate the conflicts during the redevelopment projects, which is a possibility that the current government is unwilling to risk.

5.2.2 The Power of Real Estate Developers

In addition, decades of cooperation between the government and the real estate development built them a strong alliance. In China, whether a real estate developer can survive in a rapidly changing real estate market heavily depends on its relationship with the government. Usually, via paying a huge amount of money, especially in big cities, on buying the land use rights from the government and sharing the profits that gain from the redevelopment projects, the real estate developers will be able to ensure the government's supports on suppressing the voices, especially the protests, of other stakeholders and formulating demolition and displacement policies that are in favor of developers than local communities.¹⁴¹ Moreover, many real estate developers have been elected as deputies of the People's Congress (a place similar to the Congress in United States where the government policy is discussed and made) of all levels due to their contributions to local economy, which give them stronger powers to lobby the

¹³⁹ Chen, J., Dai, D., & Pu, M. (2010). The trend of the Gini coefficient of China. *BWPI Working Paper 109*, 1-5. Retrieved from Brooks World Poverty Institute, University of Manchester, UK.

¹⁴⁰ Chen, J., Dai, D., & Pu, M. (2010). 16-20.

¹⁴¹ Chen, J., Dai, D., & Pu, M. (2010). 16-20.

Congress to formulate policies that ensure developers' long-term benefits.¹⁴² Therefore, if, for example, the developers, who possess the financial capital and the long-term relationship with all levels of government, plan to utilize the demolition and relocation strategy during the redevelopment projects, there are very limited tools for the public to response and obstruct it. The most recent case is the demolition of Liang Sicheng's Courtyard Building, a house that he has been living for more than forty years, in Dongcheng District, Beijing. The developer demolished it without any notice in order to clear the land and build a high-rise apartment building even if it is listed in Protected Cultural Relics of Beijing City.¹⁴³ Although the real estate developer was suited by the Bureau of Cultural Relics Protect and finally forced by the government and the court to suspend the project and rebuild a new courtyard according to its original condition.¹⁴⁴ The demolished house can never be reconstructed again to return the status before demolition.

5.2.3 Lack of Preservation Education

A lot of work still needs to be done to raise the public awareness of preserving built heritage in every strata of the society. The preservation education in China has just started and must be push forward to response to the crisis of the historic districts in Chinese cities. Only two universities in China have the historic preservation program under their affiliated colleges.¹⁴⁵ The students who specialize the preservation theories, methods, and technologies are still very few compared to millions of college graduates every year and cannot manage to conduct preservation practices in such a large country like China.

¹⁴² Zeng, X. (2005). Analysis on the System for Public Participation in Urban Planning (in Chinese). *Planners (规划师)*, 16(11), 16-19.

¹⁴³ Xinhua News Agency. (2012, Jan 31). The Demolition of Liang Sicheng's Old Residence (in Chinese). *Dongfang Daily (东方早报)*.

¹⁴⁴ Xinhua News Agency. (2012, Jan 31).

¹⁴⁵ Li, X. (2005)

Nowadays, there are still a large number of local residents who do not understand the meaning of preserving those old and ragged historic buildings. They do not possess basic knowledge of architectural significance of the Lilong or the glorious stories that had happened in the small Hutong they are living.¹⁴⁶ Even if they have, the residents are not able to understand the linkage between the economic development and the preservation of historic buildings or districts. The preservation of historic buildings can stimulate the long-term sustainable development of the local economy is still a statement that many residents will doubt. The same phenomenon also happens among the public. What's more, the situation is worsening by lack of national wide NGOs, such as National Trust for Historic Preservation in United States.¹⁴⁷

The methodologies that are widely used by architects and planners are old. The master plan, blue print plan, and land use plan are still essential skills for designing redevelopment projects. Even if the trend has slightly changed due to the return of the professionals that who receive the whole urban planning education in western countries, to what extent can the planner persuade the high-ranking officers in the government to allow the participation in is still a question.

¹⁴⁶ Ruan, Y. & Gu, X. (2004)

¹⁴⁷ Li, X. (2005).

Chapter 6. Conclusion

6.1 Develop Policies for public participation

It is urgent to enact laws and regulations about public participation in urban planning or especially preservation field in order to lay a legal basis for preservation. Although the laws and regulations cannot guarantee their actual restrictions towards the stakeholders especially those with strong power, they at least provide a strong back up to the weaker groups via legitimating their actions and movements on pursuing groups' rights to participate in the projects. A possible way is to establish the preservation office within all levels of planning bureau in China and then enacted regulations such as Chinese version of "Section 106" in order to put historic properties under surveillance.¹⁴⁸

Moreover, the planning administrative system should be reformed in order to achieve the efficiency and independence of the local planning bureau. The local planning bureau should be separated from the local government and directly managed by its upper-level planning bureau. The planning bureau should be entitled with rights to design plan based on the consensus from all stakeholders and the rights to implement the plan.

6.2 Develop strategies for public participation

It is important to develop NGOs progressively and cautiously. The NGOs that aims at enhancing the public participation via directly transforming political structures should be avoided under current political and economic circumstance. Instead, since it is important to enhance preservation education among all stakeholders, the NGOs that can enhance the

¹⁴⁸ Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (NHPA) requires Federal agencies to take into account the effects of their undertakings on historic properties, and afford the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation a reasonable opportunity to comment. The historic preservation review process mandated by Section 106 is outlined in regulations issued by ACHP.

awareness of preservation especially the general public should be encouraged to establish to play this role. Moreover, the league of architects and planners should be established to lead the Third Sector. The academia and professional groups, with its knowledge on theories and practices of preservation planning, are the most suitable group of people to lead the alliance. Although the lack of awareness and capacity to communicate and understand the needs of stakeholder groups other than the government and real estate developers is still a issue among academic and professional groups, the partnership between Chinese and foreign preservation institution and departments in university, the communication among scholars in international conference, and the preservation projects that are conducted via the collaboration between Chinese and western organizations will improve evidently improve the situation.

The capacity of local communities, especially the local community organizations, should be built gradually in order to participate in preservation planning process, with the assistance of academia and preservation professionals and NGO groups.

6.3 Develop tools for public participation

Tax credit tool needs to be developed to manage the acts of developers. A higher tax rate should be invented on redevelopment projects with a strategy of demolition in order to discourage the reconstruction. However, the tax credit should be invented to award the real estate developers who are in favor of preservation projects and trying to keep the local communities after the projects.

A National Conference should be held annually with the participants from different stakeholder groups. Nowadays, several conferences, for example, the “Cultural Heritage Preservation Forum”, are held each year to exchange the experiences on urban redevelopment projects among scholars, professionals, and government officers from different regions of China. These conferences can be used as a great a basis to increase the public participation by inviting

representatives from other stakeholder groups such as real estate developers, local communities, medias, and even the people who are in favor of historic preservation.

Last but not least, it is important to utilize the digital media tools to raise the awareness and strengthen the local community groups. Digital media is developing in a shift speed in China in the last five years. Unlike the traditional media types, the digital media enables the information be released in a quick manner. It may take one night for a piece of news that is wrote by a news reporter to finally debut on the next day's newspaper, the same thing takes only a few seconds on a news website. Moreover, the popularity of the social media impels the development of digital media to a further level. Instead of the professionals in the media field, nowadays, everyone can publish the information via social media platform and spread it to his connected friends and groups. When the trends come to the statistics, an explosive growth of Weibo (means Microblog), a Chinese version of twitter has been recorded. Since its establishment in 2009, the platform has quickly gained two hundred million users within the last three years.¹⁴⁹

With the characters of digital media that are discussed above, it is much harder for the government to censor the public expressions in the Internet than traditional media. Therefore, it provides an excellent platform for weaker stakeholders, such as NGOs or local community groups, to make their voices, especially their protests on social injustice or demolition issues, being heard. Even if the traditional methods, such as appealing the intervention of upper level government, calling for the help from the academia or local media, or filing a case to the court, have been blocked by the local government, there is still another channel in the Internet that can enable the weaker groups to gain supports from the other stakeholders.

¹⁴⁹ Lee, C. (2005).

For example, if a great historic district is facing a threat of being demolished, then the appeal of preserving the district has been rejected by the alliance of the government and the real estate developer, the large scale of the protests on the streets by the local residents may still be an unwise action in China. Instead, the local residents can publish the information on the Weibo platform and seek the support from the “Star” microbloggers (usually celebrities) who have a large amount of followers. Once the information have been forwarded by these microbloggers, a domino effect of information spread will be created, which will then attracted the coverage of national media, and then, the attentions of the higher-level government. Finally, under the pressure by the media and the higher-level government, the local government and real estate developer may finally withdraw their original plans.

A potential problem lies in the lack of capacities and awareness of local communities in utilizing the digital media tools. The alliance with academia and NGOs that is mentioned above should be able to take the responsibilities. Various opportunities exist, including the National Conference of Community Leaders, Community Lectures, special public participation tutorial websites, etc.

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